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was accordingly amended and the amendment published in the gazette. It was provided that the flat rate should be charged only for a period of three years from the date on which the amendment came into force. This limit of time was subsequently removed mainly on account of the increase in the cost of working the undertaking and of the necessity for a large amount of additional capital for various improvements to the plant to meet the increasing demand and to put the undertaking on a satisfactory basis.

(c) No.

Mr. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed :—" Sir, now that the cost of the undertaking and the necessity for a large amount of additional capital as has been given in answer to clause (b) of the question, is much reduced, may I know whether the Government will consider the advisability of reducing the flat rate by one anna at least ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" Mr. President, Sir, it will be noticed it was by an order dated 1921, that Government came to the conclusion that inasmuch as the cost of working such undertakings are systematically increasing owing to the rise of prices of machinery and materials and to the rise in wages of labour, the increase of rate is justified. If hon. Members of this House and the Corporation will put their heads together and point out that the rates can be lowered Government will be glad to consider such suggestions."

Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar :—" Does not the final order shut up any such possibility ? The limit of time is removed for some reasons. Is the door still open to change the rates ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" The Government have definitely said in the order of 1921 that they reserve to themselves the power, when the conditions alter, to revise the rates."

Irrigation

Improvement of drainage in Godavari western delta.

* 219 Q.—Mr. D. Narayana Raju : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether any proposals have been submitted to Government for the improvement of drainage in the Godavari western delta ; and

(b) if so, what action the Government intend to take on them ?

A.—(a) No specific proposals for drainage in the western delta have been received, but the Chief Engineer has applied for extra staff for the purpose of remodelling the channels and improving the drainage of the delta as a whole.

(b) This is now under the consideration of the Government.

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" Sir, in answer given to a question on 24th March 1925, the Government were pleased to give a list of drainage works which were on the programme for approval. May I know what became of these drainage works, and why there were no specific proposals now made ? "

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The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" As a matter of fact, specific proposals were put forward. But the Finance Committee put the whole scheme under class III. This year again they put it under class III. In spite of it, certain proposals for remodelling the drainage in the Godavari delta have been put in class II and will come up for discussion in the budget."

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" May I know why the remodelling of the channels and the drainage of the delta were mixed up instead of each being kept separate ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" They were considered to be a part of a comprehensive programme."

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" The remodelling of the channels relates to irrigation, and this remodelling has so long been going on. So far as the ryots are concerned, they find that it does not do them any good. But drainage was badly neglected for a long number of years and needs immediate attention. May I know what difficulty is there to take up drainage separately ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" It will be considered, Sir."

Marine

Increased estimates for the Tuticorin Deep Water Harbour scheme.

*220 Q.—Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether the estimates for the Tuticorin Deep Water Harbour scheme have now risen to 57 lakhs while they were only 40 lakhs in the beginning and, if so, what are the chief reasons for the large increase ;

(b) whether the dues collected at the Harbour have recently been increased very much and, if so, to what extent and whether there is a likelihood of the dues being increased if the scheme is to be constructed according to the revised estimates and, if so, to what extent ;

(c) whether there is a proposal to change the site of the harbour and, if so, what the cost of the change will be and whether shop owners and house owners near the present harbour have protested against it ; and

(d) whether it is a fact that the citizens of Tuticorin held a public meeting on the 28th November 1926 and passed resolutions protesting against the increasing cost on the ground that it will seriously affect the interests of trade in the port and, if so, whether copies of the resolutions have been sent to the Government and whether the Government have passed orders on the same and to what effect ?

A.—(a) The estimates prepared in 1923 by the Harbour Engineer-in-Chief to Government for the execution of the harbour works at Tuticorin amounted to Rs. 39·96 lakhs. The works are now estimated to cost about Rs. 57 lakhs. The increase is due partly to the provision for the construction of a dry dock for the use of the vessels working at the port, and mainly to the need for additional plant, including a more powerful dredger capable of dealing expeditiously with a very compact hard stratum of yellow sandstone conglomerate which has been encountered at 24 feet below water.